WMD; expand the defence trade, production and technology relationship with the US; and promote regional and global peace and stability, jointly or with others, through expanded interaction with other nations, exchange of perspectives of international security issues, increased intelligence exchanges, capacity building of other countries for peace- keeping operations, and collaboration in multinational operations when it is the common interest.

(b) The Framework is expected to enlarge available sources and options for the acquisition of defence equipment, provide access to advanced US defence technologies, help strengthen and modernize the Indian Armed Forces, and increase our leverage and strategic maneuverability in international affairs.

(c) No such participation is contemplated or implied in this arrangement. Participation in any operations will be guided by the national interest and principles of our foreign and defence policies, including our independent stand on international issues.

New Framework for the US-India Defence Relationship

262. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:
SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:
SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether during his recent visit to the USA, India and the USA signed on June 28, 2005 and agreement called the "New Framework for the US India Defence Relationship";

(b) if so, what are the salient features of this agreement; and

(c) what are the benefits which are likely to accrue to India from this new agreement?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) A document entitled "New Framework for the US-India Defence Relationship" was signed on June 28, 2005, during the Raksha Mantri's visit to the United States of America (USA).

The 'Framework' updates the 'Agreed Minutes on Defence Relations between India and the United States' signed in January 1995 and seeks to advance common security interests such as maintaining security and stability; defeating terrorism and violent religious extremism; preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and related materials, data and technologies; and protecting the free flow of commerce.

The 'Framework' seeks to *inter alia* enhance the capabilities of the Indian Armed Forces to deal with terrorism, disasters, and the spread of weapons of mass destruction, promote a defence trade, production and technology relationship with the US, exchange intelligence and perspectives on international security issues and defence policies of common interest, enlarge our options and bargaining power in the acquisition defence equipment and technology, and increase our standing in international affairs.

Spreading AIDS in Army Jawans

†263. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether with a view to weakening the jawans of army who have tightened their grip on the terrorist activities along the border, some foreign Government are conspiring to spread AIDS among them;

(b) if so, the number of cases in this regard that have come to light;

(c) whether sex workers are being utilized in such cases; and

(d) if so, the arrangements being made by the Government to avoid such a situation?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) There is no medical evidence to believe the existence of such a conspiracy. The Armed Forces Medical Services have a vibrant Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) control programme and the status of HIV/AIDS in the Armed Forces is being closely monitored.

(b) to (d) In view of (a) above, question does not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.